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APR 77 A SHEVALEV, V P FILATOVA
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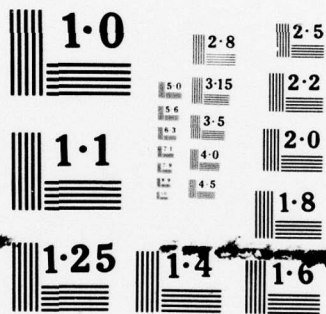
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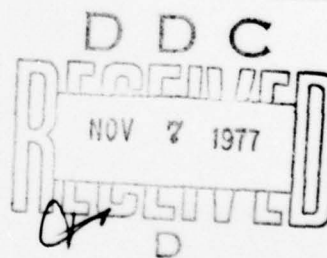
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FROM SENSATIONAL STIR TO SERIOUS RESEARCH
EXPERIMENTS CONFIRM--YES, SKIN "SIGHT EXITS,"

by

A. Shevaley, V. P. Filatova



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"FROM SENSATIONAL STIR TO SERIOUS RESEARCH:
EXPERIMENTS CONFIRM -- YES, SKIN "SIGHT" EXISTS."

A. Shevaley, V. P. Filatova

Color and Light by touch... What is this, the latest discovery, a naive error, or a shameless hoax? Don't the subjects peek during the tests? Doesn't this smack of telepathy -- the transmission of thoughts over a distance? These questions up to now have agitated peoples' minds. But there already are answers to many of them. Some dilettante commentators, without having properly looked into the scientific essence of the matter, have tried to accuse the subjects of unscrupulousness. Let's look into the matter.

Suggestion Is Absent, Peeking is Excluded

...The subject is eleven-year-old Larisa Perebeynos. When she enters the dark room, she closes her eyes. After that a piece of film (180 units State All-Union Standard) is placed on her eye-lids; on top of it her face is bandaged with thick black material. The subject is led into a bright room and helped to sit down at a table. A closed wooden box is put in front of her. It contains a number of paper squares of different colors. They are thoroughly shuffled. Everyone goes to an adjacent room in order that they see neither the subject nor the box of paper squares.

After that Larisa is instructed to open the box and shuffle the paper squares. Taking them out one by one, the girl loudly states their color and sticks the pieces of paper on a needle. Her responses are written down by the experimenter, who is in the next room. When the experiment is over, we return to Larisa's room and begin to check the colors noted down against the squares pinned on the needle. We are convinced of the correctness of all ten determinations. Development of the film that had been placed on her eyes confirms that light had not penetrated to the girl's eyes during the forty-five minutes of the experiment. During the experiment there was no one in the place where it was conducted who would know the colors of the paper squares chosen by Larisa from the box. Thus there can be

question of the transmission of thoughts at a distance.

Yes, This Is Skin "Sight"!

The subject is eleven-year-old Natasha Bershadskaya. The experiment begins as did the previous one. The only difference being that the squares of colored paper are enclosed between two pieces of glass, whose edges are covered with a strip of white paper.

Before the beginning of the experiment the squares in the box are shuffled by a person who thereafter takes no part in the experiment and is not acquainted with its content. The same person hands the closed box to the experimenter. When she names the colors, she piles the plates in order in a cardboard box. And again the determinations of colors are performed correctly! Moreover, through glass, and not by direct feeling

Girl "sees" the color with her hands at a distance of 5 cm from the object.



of the surface of the paper, which excludes the participation of tactile sensing. After carrying out a series of such tests, we requested our colleagues in the Urals to check us by repeating the experiments following our methodology. Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences N.I. Sudskov reported from Magnitogorsk

that he had conducted successfully an analogous experiment with three students. The subjects took the colored plates from the box, felt them with their fingers and determined their colors. Red pieces of glass were put into a box on the left and yellow ones into a box on the right. Out of 60 determinations 43 proved to be correct and 17 erroneous.

Does a Blind Person Need Glasses?

Vanya Dubovik went blind at the age of eight. Both of his damaged eyes and optical nerves were removed. Nevertheless, the world of colors was not lost by Vanya. The boy distinguishes colors by touch, day after day perfecting his ability. But not in this, and not even in the reading of a flat printed text with the finger tips do we see the most valuable possibilities for the utilization of skin "sight" by blind people.

One more experiment. A photographic lens is fastened to a boy's forehead. A spot of light is focussed on the skin of the forehead. The boy senses the light well and even discerns its brightness...

The experiments on developing "sight" by the skin of the forehead with the use of optical devices that focus the images of surrounding objects have as their aim the helping of the blind and persons with poor sight to orient themselves in their surroundings.

Nothing Supernatural!

About the ethical side of the matter. The overwhelming majority of publications on skin "sight", unfortunately, belong to journalists and not to scientists. Perhaps, therefore, the noisy and rather confused mass campaign that has developed around skin "sight" does now, especially to children who "see with their skin," harm rather than good.

In my view, what should a scientist who takes up this problem do first of all? Firstly, he must very rigorously select for the experiments only "pure material." He must dismiss from the experiments people who do not withstand checking. Secondly, he must tell them honestly, as Roza Kuleshova was told: "Roza, you are not unique. There are many such..." And also, "We study such people not in order to glorify but in order to at some time help the blind. Thus this is quite ordinary work."

Two and a half years of experiments carried out by Soviet scientists have not passed in vain. It has now been proved that we are dealing not with a hoax and not with "clairvoyance." Before us is an immediate problem, a problem that is complicated, interesting, and important practically, a problem that possibly may reveal new sub-surface layers in our physiology.

Our correspondents visited the laboratory of Candidate of Medical Sciences Andrey Evgen'yevich Shevaley in Odessa. A solidly built figure, hair cut short and already showing signs of early grey -- the scientist gave the impression of an athlete who had donned a scientist's coverall.

"I was indeed for many years enthusiastic about mountain climbing. Now my passion is the sea. I spend my free time on a yacht."

"Tell me, doctor, why did you take up the problems of skin 'sight'?"

I prepared a doctoral dissertation on glaucoma, an eye disease very widespread in the East. Many hundreds of thousands of people who are stricken by it lose their sight for ever. Today we are seeking paths to broadening the possibilities of perceiving the surrounding world for people who have weak sight

or who have entirely lost their vision. That is why the problem of skin 'sight' has taken on for us a particularly practical importance. I believe that having studied the unusual phenomenon we shall be able to help blind people. The main thing is to investigate the phenomenon leaving aside preconception and chance."

"You evidently for that reason used the light-sensitive film that was placed on the eyes?"

"Not only^{that}. The subject may indeed be influenced by suggestion. We even experimented in this direction. A child with damaged eyes was surrounded by several doctors who, seeing an object of this or that color, caused the test child to select precisely it, acting only by suggestion. That is why in our experiments the selection of color is always done without outside interference -- the subject is alone in the room."

"Tell me, have you conducted experiments confirming the supposition that skin 'sight' is the result of the perception of one's own electromagnetic radiation that has been reflected by the object?"

"No, we have not yet tested the hypothesis of Academician B. Konstantinov. But we have staged other experiments. We have made a large number of outwardly completely identical metal squares out of different metals. Among them were ferro-, para-, and diamagnetic alloys. When, however, they were touched by a person who was undergoing the experiments, he gave one and the same answer: 'I see white!' This proves that skin 'sight' is not underlain by a phenomenon connected with magnetism. What kind of phenomenon it is will be shown by the future."

"Your subsequent plans?"

"Together with my principal work investigating the causes

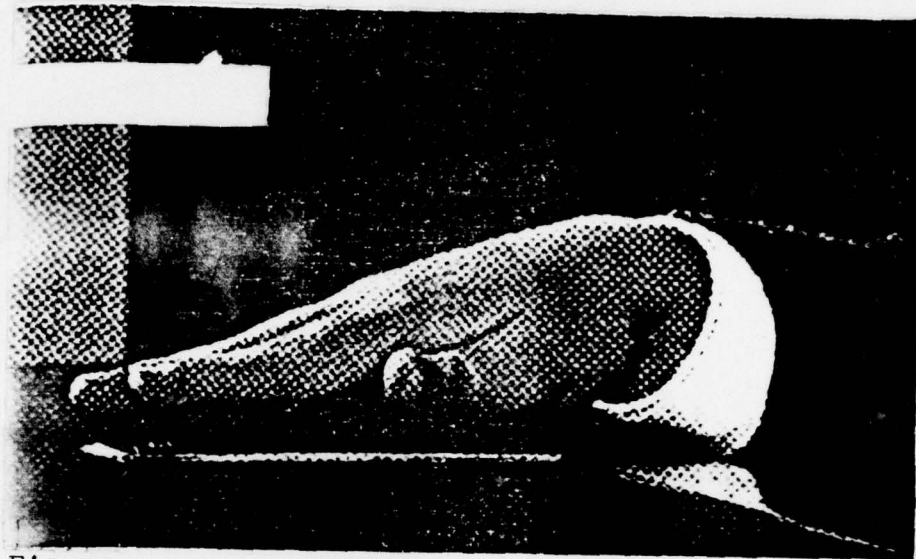


Figure.

of glaucoma our laboratory will continue working on the problem of skin "sight". I personally consider this phenomenon extremely important and am convinced that with time, when the secret of the phenomenon will be revealed, we shall succeed in putting the new achievement of science to the benefit of people who are suffering."

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